

Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

Meeting Notes for March 20, 2002

Agenda Items

- STart Program Update

Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg
Matthew Kitchen
Carolyn Law
Jay Lazerwitz
Jack Mackie

Staff Present

Debora Ashland, Sound Transit
Marty Curry, Planning Commission
Cheryl Sizov, CityDesign
Kathy A Dockins, CityDesign

LRRP Business

The Panel and staff present reviewed the minutes, and Cheryl realized that some information was missing. Jack added that he had expressed concern in the 3/6 meeting about the platform canopy that was not included in the minutes. He felt the canopy was too monolithic (needed more lightness and translucency) and that the interior lighting fixtures were inappropriate. "This isn't a weighted box structure; it needs lighting ideas that will make it physically lighter." He also wanted to make sure that an architectural (as opposed to a civil engineering) finish was used on the concrete wall of the tunnel.

Jay moved to approve only the action; Jack seconded. The action was approved, and the rest of the minutes will be approved electronically after additional editing by Cheryl.

Jay brought up the issue of security in the Downtown Transit Tunnel once it is used for Link. Its hours will be extended because trains will run later into the evening than buses do currently; what security measures will address that? Debora responded that since this is a safety/operational issues, those comments/questions will be forwarded to Mike Williams.

Cheryl Sizov gave the LRRP Staff Update. She spoke with Jon Layzer regarding a letter from the Panel to City Council supporting the Mayor's desire for undergrounding utilities along the MLK Corridor in as many places as possible. Jon suggesting waiting until after attending the Council's next meeting (April 1) where this will be discussed, before drafting a letter. Cheryl said she would try to have a draft ready for review by the next LRRP meeting (April 3). Both Jay and Jack noted they will not be present at that meeting. The Panel members said they feel strongly enough about the issue to talk to the Council first. Cheryl will go to the Council meeting to get a read on the situation; and will invite Jon Layzer to attend LRRP's April 3 meeting to give his assessment of Council's position on the issue.

Rick Sundberg announced that he intends to leave LRRP, effective today. All thanked him for his contribution to the Panel and, in particular, his leadership as Chair.

Debora Ashland gave the Sound Transit update. She asked if ST folks should also be present at the April 3 meeting to discuss undergrounding and the letter, to which Cheryl said yes. Debora also reported on the schedule for design work this spring. Jay asks about the ST website: he visited it that day and felt there wasn't enough detail going out to the public; the information is too schematic. The illustrations of the MLK Stations in particular are much more spare than what the Panel has seen. Deborah says the site doesn't usually have the most up-to-date graphics. The submission date for 60% design work for the MLK

stations is May 1st and there will be nothing new to show until then. Carla suggests inserting a direct link to SPO for specific plans and drawings.

STart Program Update

Dan Corson, STart

Norie Sato

CarolValenta

Carol reminded the Panel that the Link Art Plan had been on hiatus awaiting a decision from the Board about final project alignment last November. On April 4 they will be having a First Thursday exhibit in the Great Hall since there is artwork that is completed but not yet ready for installation. A lot of work went into the North stations, which now will not be built, so we are still reassigning some VAT members. Members without current assignments are Laura Haddad and Bill Will (for the S 200th Station, which may not be built) and Sheila Klein (McClellan Station). They are approaching the artwork on a system-wide level first; then as four separate projects. Copies of the Sound Transit Art Plan for Link Light Rail were distributed and its contents briefly described as follows:

System-wide

The Braid: Norie explains that the braid was created as a link between stations: a tactile wayfinding path. They have gotten approval on the braid prototype from the CAAC for use as part of wayfinding; now they are developing its art object element: what form will it take? The braid can be inside the station or outside, and station markers may be linked to the braid. The markers are not yet part of the system but will have ST signage as well as the Link logo. The braid is intended to serve as an art metaphor which will tie into artwork at other stations. It could be located on a plinth, or inset into a wall – the overall art metaphor is the goal.

Tales on the Rails: artwork with a literary focus. It is possible this artwork could be changed periodically. The collection could also be printed and distributed to passengers.

Construction: Temporary art during station construction will provide an opportunity for artists, an opportunity for ST to work with the individual neighborhoods, and will mitigate some of the negative impacts of construction. Artwork could also be placed in unused areas of construction staging. The budget is allocated by sub-area, so decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

North King County Sub-area

Downtown Transit Tunnel will include the braid, but no additional artwork will be added and no modifications to current artwork are planned.

E-3 Corridor—new murals are being commissioned for the (filling in blank spaces as well as updating current murals), but nothing will be awarded until one to two years before operations begin. The murals will be done by ArtWorks, which empowers at-risk youth through the creation of art.

Lander Station – almost at 100% design completion. The artist was given the Panel's comments, and some additional thinking has gone into the arch. Lots of color, surface texture, and art integrated into benches (lunch pail). Columns going in in 2004; other artwork completed earlier in two stations.

Maintenance Base – MoHal recently gave ST the Rainier "R" from the old brewery to use as part of an art project, so ST is thinking it will work best there. Dan is looking at the lighting capabilities.

Beacon Hill – Lauren Grossman has been hired as the plaza artist, and there will be a meeting soon about how it can be developed. Lauren lives in Beacon Hill.

McClellan – Sheila Klein will focus her efforts on the touchdown area. Sound Transit will also commission a sculpture for the plaza which will be the first in the “MLK Culture Corridor (working title).” The intention of the MLK CC is to create a corridor-wide link between artwork at the individual stations, highlighting the cultural differences in how they interact. It's not a theme so much as an ethic. Different layers in the MLK Corridor (stations, plazas) will be the means to express that, and artists are already on board for those and other potential sites (SHA sites, OCS poles, etc). OCS poles are a system-wide element that can be used as part of the MLK Culture Corridor to create a distinctive neighborhood identity. The desire is to keep them simple and elegant, with wayfinding at each end to indicate you're getting close to the Corridor. ST is working with the task force on pole color. The top is integral, but oddly enough, cannot be lighted. Bracelets/bands of differing materials and colors on the poles may create horizontal movement/pattern.

Edmunds – Gale McCall is working on two-dimensional artwork with a focus on gathering (baskets) and exploring (magnifying glasses).

Othello – Artist Brian Goldbloom plans to continue the Asian feel of the station's architecture through its artwork.

Henderson – A metal sculpture in flight, “Dragonfly” by Darlene Nguyen-Ely, will be a focal point of the station, referencing the canopy “wings” and the spine and ribs of the architecture.

Station Plaza Artworks – Victoria Fuller, Roger Shimomura, and Buster Simpson have been commissioned to integrate artwork into the station plaza design. Also, primarily stand-alone pieces will be created by other artists (yet to be commissioned) for the Edmunds South plaza and the second Othello plaza. Poles will be raised for “neighborhood quilts.” More info is forthcoming on Pedestrian Corridor artworks.

South King County Sub-area

As yet, no artist commissioned for rail line between Henderson and South 154th. At S 154th, Artist Tad Savinar has collaborated with Hewitt Architects from the beginning of the design process, and is focusing on the mezzanine for art. It has high ceilings and a lot of natural light, and may end up fashioned into a “room” with artworks hung from the ceiling.

Discussion

- Let us see South 154th, just to be aware of design and artwork for reasons of context/other system elements.
- I am concerned about having the Lander artwork done so soon before the station is operational. What about vandalism?
- Will the property owners provide easements, and possibly funding for the murals along the E-3 corridor? *Yes, easements, but no funding.* Remind the property owners that supporting this project financially means spending less time and money on graffiti removal. *It's still unclear whether or not the Leda Batho project will happen, but ST will fund artwork as part of SoDo. Metro may incorporate it into its base projects.*
- Tales/Quilt: I'm very happy to see artists **other** than visual artists engaged for “Tales on the Rails.”
- At the Maintenance Base, pay attention to edge/iconic gate.

- I'm curious to see the McClellan touchdown area re: pedestrian access desire. Let's really focus our money where the pedestrians can get at it. Others are visual resources, but can be an attractive nuisance, too. I have a similar concern regarding the Quilt and pedestrian access desire. Let the artists work in another medium they are unfamiliar with – yes! OCS: go for it!
- What did we see earlier with OCS? It is a reasonably attractive design as-is.
- Color discussions? *Yes, the MLK Task Force is discussing it. The trend is to go with a system color, maybe with an accent color. At the stations, we will leave the poles alone.*
- I support that, with two different conditions. At the stations, along running area. *I'd like to hear your color comments.*
- OCS will be a defining element, running fence. Already provided comments on color. *Paint all poles a color? Discussing this.*
- Are we undergrounding or not? Different values of color lead to different awareness of the element. *All poles or just each set of poles a color?*
- There is a balance between color that calms everything down or not. Pushing the poles back (visually) or pulling them forward.
- In San Jose County, each area paints their poles a different color. White really stands out, for example.
- I have concern about the bracelet idea; the color fighting with it.
- Overall, seeing these many pieces raises a concern for me about what the final "feel" of the corridor is going to be? *SESAC wanted to create art nodes at stations. In-between there isn't as much as you'd think. We're trying to put a plan in place for including art in the future. There is so much that could be done. We're trying to focus on big pieces vs. little things everywhere. Keeping art for art as a primary focus; vs. these things as functional pieces.*
- At least the art component will be its own thing – more independent from the rest of the system. *Like a big sculpture garden.*
- Undergrounding – if we're doing it, then the marker has a greater presence, as do the plazas. Add those items into the big-picture drawings. The pedestrian will experience this in the aggregate.
- Computer model the undergrounding and above ground options! It's not complicated, it's just time-consuming. Test it in different light conditions. You'll be better able to make decisions. How can you decide this without some samples? Paint can change color and look different at different times of the day! We only saw bits and pieces before.
- Yes, turn layers off and on to test alternatives.
- I like the OCS bangle, what does the top do? Is it the same top or different?
- There is an art installation in New Mexico where a single object has been repeated in regular spacing, creating very different and fascinating reflections of light over the course of a day from dawn to dusk.
- I'd like to raise an issue re: sea of poles at Maintenance Base—that clump of poles should be treated as a unit and designed accordingly.
- McClellan—If you are pull art from the station area to the touchdown structure; who exactly participates in that? Riders? Car drivers? Stray pedestrians? I'm concerned about whether we are putting the artwork in the location that will benefit the most people. *Sound Transit noted the comment and also asked if poles should also march up the transition structure?*

With this, the discussion concluded. No action was taken. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.